

New York Saturday Evening Post

A HOME WEEKLY FOR WINTER NIGHTS
AND SUMMER DAYS.

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Vol. VI.

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William Adams,
David Adams,

PUBLISHERS.

NEW YORK, MAY 15, 1875.

TERMS IN ADVANCE.

One copy, four months, \$1.00.
One copy, one year, \$2.00.
Two copies, one year, \$3.00.

No. 270.

YOUTH'S DREAMS.

BY HARVEY HOWARD.

A silver brooklet laughingly sprung
From its fountain in the mountain at dawn;
Through the wide valley its merry song rung,
As it leaped o'er the rocks and was gone.
Softly it rippled o'er pebbles and moss,
Hiding its face from the gaze of the day,
Or sparkled and glowed with a sun-given gloss
As it rapidly sped on its way.
Soon it was joined by another sweet brook,
That came from a deep, shaded dell,
Where in a jewel-strown, sweet silvan nook
Its waters of brilliancy fell.
Just at the gloaming they met with a kiss,
And loveliness mingled their quivering streams,
Sweet was their low-murmured anthem of bliss
As the music that runs through a poet's dreams.
Wide open and deep the winged stream ran,
Dropping and darting its spray and spray,
Till the spark that kindled it when it began
Was grown to a glow of unshining flame.
Now the children played round and about it,
And brilliant birds ruffled its flow,
Till life were not living without it,
With its ripple so sweet and its glow.
On—onward it sped to the river
That flowed through the plains to the sea;
As they met, the lost brook, with a quiver,
To low moaning changed all its sweet glee.
For before it was queen of the streams,
And now it is least in the flow,
Naught is left but the memory of dreams
That came in the night, long ago—
Of dreams that its tide should grow greater,
And wider its surface should be,
That the glow of its heart should be brighter,
And the streamlet should grow to a sea!

Victoria:

THE HEIRESS OF CASTLE CLIFFE.

BY MRS. MAY AGNES FLEMING,
AUTHOR OF "THE DARK SECRET," "AWFUL
MYSTERY," "THE RIVAL BROTHERS," ETC.

CHAPTER IV.

TWELVE YEARS AFTER.

The great bell of Clifton cathedral was just ringing the hour of five. The early morning was dim with hazy mist, but the sky was blue and cloudless; and away in the east, a crimson glory was spreading, the herald of the rising sun. Early as the hour was, all was bustle and busy life in the town of Cliftonlea; you would have thought, had you seen the concourse of people in High street, it was noon instead of five in the morning. Windows, too, were opening in every direction; nightcapped heads being popped out; anxious glances being cast at the sky, and then the nightcaps were popped in again; and the windows slammed down, and everybody making their toilet, eager to be out. Usually, Cliftonlea was as quiet and well-behaved a town as any in England, but on the night previous to this memorable morning, its two serene guardian angels, Peace and Quietness, had taken unto themselves wings and flown far away. The clatter of horses and wheels had made night hideous; the jingling of bells and shouts of children, and the tramp of numberless footsteps had awoke the dull echoes from nightfall till daydawn. In short, not to keep any one in suspense, this was the first day of the annual Cliftonlea races—and Bartlemey fair, in the days of Henry the Eighth, was not a circumstance to the Cliftonlea races. Nobody in the whole town, under the sensible and settled age of thirty, thought of eating a mouthful that morning; it was sacrifice to think of such a groveling matter as breakfast on the first glorious day; and so new coats and hats, and smart dresses, were donned, and all the young folks came pouring out in one continuous stream toward the scene of action.

The long, winding road of three miles, between Cliftonlea and the race-course, on common everyday days, was the pleasantest road in the world—bordered with fragrant hawthorn hedges, with great waving fields of grain and clover on each hand, and shadowed here and there with giant beeches and elms. But it was not a particularly cool or tranquil tramp on this morning, for the throng of vehicles and foot-passengers was fearful, and the clouds of simooms of dust more frightful still. There were huge refreshment caravans, whole troops of strolling players, gangs of gypsies, wandering minstrels, and all such roving vagabonds; great booths on four wheels, carts, drays, wagons, and every species of conveyance imaginable. There were equestrians, too, chiefly mounted on mules and donkeys; there were jingling of bells, and no end of shouting, cursing and vociferating, so that it was the liveliest morning that road had known for at least twelve months.

There rose the brightest of suns, and the bluest of skies, scorching and glaring hot. The volumes of dust were awful, and came rolling even into the town; but still the road was crowded, and still the cry was, "They come!" But the people and vehicles which passed were of another nature now. The great caravans and huge carts had almost ceased, and young England came flashing along in tandems, and dog-carts, and files, and four-in-hands, or mounted on prancing steeds. The officers from the Cliftonlea barracks—dashing dragoons in splendid uniforms—flew like the wind through the dust, and sporting country-gentlemen in top-boots and knowing caps, and fox-hunters in pink, and betting-men, and blacklegs, book in hand, followed, as if life and death depended on their haste. In two or three more hours came another change—superb barouches, broughams, phaetons, grand carriages with coachmen and footmen in livery, magnificent



"Mother, I have come home again!"

"Oh, your female angels often turn out to have the heart of Old Nick himself," said Captain Douglas, tightening his belt. "I don't mean to say she has, you know; but those Clifffes are infernally proud people. They all are. I have known some of their distant cousins, and so on, poor as old Job's turkey, and proud as the devil. Cliffe Shirley committed that most heinous of social crimes—a low marriage. There was the Dickens to pay, of course, when my lady yonder heard it; and the upshot was, the poor fellow was disinherited. His wife died a year after the marriage; but he had a daughter. I remember his telling me of her a thousand times, with the stars of India shining down on our bivouac. Poor Clifford he was a glorious fellow! but I have heard he was killed since I came home, scaling the walls of Monagoola, or some such place."

"Whom did he marry?"

"I forgot, now. He never would speak of his wife; but I have heard she was a ballerina or opera-singer, or something of that sort."

"All wrong!" said a voice at his elbow. And there stood Lord Henry Lisle, slapping his boots with a ratan, and listening languidly.

"Vivia, owned by Sir Roland Cliffe, of Cliftonlea, and Lady Agnes, owned by Lord Henry Lisle, of Lisleham, were to take the lead that day.

"Two to one on Vivia!" cried Captain Douglas, of the light dragoons.

"Done!" cried a brother officer. "I am ready to back the Lady Agnes against any odds!"

The bets were booked, and as Captain Douglas put his betting-book in his pocket with a smile on his lip, and his quick eye glanced up at him, he suddenly exclaimed:

"And here comes the Lady Agnes herself, looking stately as a queen and fair as a lily, as she always does!"

"I know. Cliffe Shirley married her, and she died, as you have said, a year after."

Captain Douglas gave an intensely long whistle of astonishment.

"Oh, that was the way of it, then? No wonder his lady mother was outrageous. A Cliffe marry an actress?"

"Just so!" drawled Lord Lisle, slapping the dust off his boots. "And if her son hadn't married her, her brother would! Sir Roland

recently went distracted about her."

"Oh, nonsense! He married that black-eyed widow—that cousin Charlotte of his, with the little boy—in half a year after."

Captain Douglas laughed.

"And is it for the same reason you have named your red road-steed after Lady Agnes—Lisle?"

Lord Lisle actually blushed. Everybody knew how infatuated the insipid young peer was about the haughty lady of Castle Cliffe, who might have been his mother; and everybody laughed at him, except the lady herself, who, in an uplifted sort of way, was splendidly and serenely scornful.

"Lovely creature!" lisped the ensign. "And those ponies are worth a thousand guineas, if they're worth one."

"How much? Where is she? Is she here?" cried Lord Lisle, who was mentally and physically rather obtuse, staring around him. "Oh, I see her! Excuse me, gentlemen; I must pay my respects."

Off went Lord Lisle like a bolt from a bow. The officers looked at each other and laughed.

"Now, you'll see the grandly-disdainful reception he'll get," said Captain Douglas. "The queenly descendant of the Clifffes treats the

wager—Vivia gets ahead—a shout arises—she keeps ahead—Lady Agnes is dead beat! and Vivia, amid a tremendous cheer, comes triumphantly in the winner.

"That's three thousand pounds in my pocket!" said Captain Douglas, coolly. "Hallo, Shirley! What's the row?"

For Tom Shirley was tearing along, very red in the face, his elbows in the ribs of society, and looking as much like a distracted meteor as ever. He halted in a high state of excitement at the captain's salute.

"The most glorious sight! Such a girl! You ought to see her! She's positively stunning!"

"Who's stunning, Tom? Don't be in a hurry to answer. You're completely blown."

"I'll be blown again, then, if I stop talking here! If you want to see her, come along, and look for yourself."

"I'm your man!" said the captain, thrusting his arm through Tom's and sticking his other elbow, after that spirited young gentleman's fashion, into the sides of everybody who opposed him. "And now relieve my curiosity, like a good fellow, as we go along."

"Oh, it's a tight-rope dancer!" said Tom. "Make haste, or you won't see her, and it's a sight to see, I tell you!"

"Is she pretty, Tom?"

"A regular trump!" said Tom. "Get out of the way, you old kangaroo, or I'll pitch you into the middle of next week."

This last apostrophe was addressed to a stout gentleman, who came along panting, and snorting, and mopping his face. And as the old gentleman and everybody else got out of the way of this human whirlwind in horror, they soon found themselves before a large canvas tent around which an immense concourse of people, young and old, were gathered. A great pole, fifty feet high, stuck up through the middle of this tent, and a thick wire-rope came slanting down to the ground. Two or three big men, in a bright uniform of scarlet and yellow, were keeping the throng away from this, and a band of modern troubadours, with brass instruments in their mouths, were discussing the "British Grenadiers." A very little boy was beating a very big drum in a very large way, so that when the captain spoke, he had to shout as people do through an ear-trumpet.

"How are we to get through this crowd to the tent, if the damsel you speak of is within it?"

"Oh, she'll be out presently!" said Tom; "she is going to give the common herd a specimen of her powers, by climbing up to the dizzy top of that pole, and dancing the polka mazurka, or an Irish jig, or something of that sort, on the top. And while we are waiting for her, just look here!"

The captain looked. On every hand there were huge placards, with letters three feet long, in every color of the rainbow, so that he who ran might read, and the text of these loud posters was somewhat in this fashion:

UNRIVALLED ATTRACTION!

Unprecedented Inducement!

The Infant Venus!

The Pet and Favorite of the Royal Family, the Nobility, and Gentry of England!

Come one! Come all! The Infant Venus!! The Infant Venus!!!

Admission, 6d.: Children, half price.

By the time the captain had got to the end of this absorbing piece of literature, a murmuring and swaying motion of the crowd told him that the Infant Venus herself had appeared in the outer world. There was a suppressed rush—the men in scarlet jackets flourished their batons dangerously near the noses of the dear public. There was an excited murmur: "Where is she?" "What is she like?" "Oh, I can't see her!" And everybody's eyes were starting out of their heads to make sure that the Infant Venus was of real flesh and blood, and not an optical delusion. But soon they were satisfied. A glittering figure, sparkling and shining like the sunlight from head to foot, bearing the Union Jack of Old England in either hand, went fluttering up this slender wire. The crowd held its breath, the music changed to a quick, wild measure, and the beautiful vision floated up in the sunshine, keeping time to the exciting strain. It was the light, slender figure of a girl of thirteen or fourteen, with the little tapering feet gleaming in spangled slippers of white satin, the slight form arrayed in a short white gossamer skirt reaching to the knee; and, like the slippers, all over silver spangles. Down over the bare white shoulders waved such a glorious fall of golden-bronze hair, half long gray eyes, neither bright nor expressive; sharp, pinched features, and altogether an inexplicably cowed and subdued look. Her hair was pretty—the only pretty thing about her—dark, and thick, and curly, as all the Shirleys were; but it could not relieve the sombre, swallow face, the pinched, angular figure, and everybody wondered what Lady Agnes could see in that fairy changeling; and shrugged their shoulders to think that she should reign in Castle Cliffe, whose mistresses had always been the country's boast for their beauty.

The knot of officers watching Lord Lisle had all their expectations realized. His profound bow received only the slightest and coldest answer from the haughty head. Then Tom Shirley jumped from the carriage, and mangled little form, and the bronze hair will be crimson in blood. But she is at the top; she is looking down upon them, she waves her flags triumphant in her eagle eyrie, and a mighty cheer goes up from a hundred throats, that makes the whole plain ring. And now the music changes again; it grows slower, and the fairy in silver spangles begins to descend. If she should miss, even now! but no; she is on

the top, and she is looking down upon them, she waves her flags triumphant in her eagle eyrie, and a mighty cheer goes up from a hundred throats, that makes the whole plain ring. And now the music changes again; it grows slower, and the fairy in silver spangles begins to descend. If she should miss, even now! but no; she is on

"Woof!" he suddenly exclaimed, shaking himself like a huge bear, "I'm just spilin' for a fight, and I'll face anybody or everybody here, I don't kee a cuss which. Come, trot out some of yer big crowin' cocks, if they want to bounce spurs with this ole chicken, Missouri Moll, the King of the Stage."

No one responded to his urgent request, but hearing a man talking rather loud at the other end of the saloon, he waltzed up to him and said:

"See here, Manuel Chicaloo, do you know what you are sayin'? Are you throwin' out insinuations against Missouri Moll?"

"I wasn't sayin' anything 'bout you, Mis-

souri; I wasn't even thinkin' of you."

"Oh, there! the devil you say!" roared the bully; "then I'm beneath your notice, am I? See here, Chicaloo, you've got to fight me for that insult. You sha'n't run over—"

"You misunderstood me, Missouri, you did indeed. I said—"

"Oh! then I'm a fool, am I? Well, by thunder, I won't take that," and the much-injured Missouri Moll "squared" off and knocked down Manuel Chicaloo.

At this same instant a shout, a pistol-shot and a groan came from the opposite end of the hall, and drew the attention of our friends to that direction.

A brief scuffle ensued, during which a number of lamps and tables were overturned upon the floor, which was of the solid ground.

"There!" roared Missouri Moll, as if half provoked, "I'm wanted up thar. It beats the ole devil that I've got to be everywhere to keep peace among this quar'lin' pack."

The desperado moved toward the opposite end of the hall, and the crowd swayed after him.

For awhile a Babel-like murmur filled the room, then the hoarse voice of the stage-driver was heard to shout:

"Clear the way thar, ye varmints!"

The crowd at once parted, and four men, carrying the lifeless body of a man, moved down the hall and out at the door. And a thread of blood stretched the full length of the building out into the darkness.

Major St. Kenelm shuddered, and a vague horror filled his breast.

"That poor feller war dead," whispered Dakota Dan, "He staked his life at cards, and lost all."

"My God, Dan! if this is life in New Mexico, I want none of it," said St. Kenelm; "Mississippi towns are nothing compared with Conejos."

"Oh, this is all right, major," responded the old ranger, sarcastically; "this is a spot of our republican government—our glorious star-spangled American eagle. Judicious legislation brought about this millennium. Give Congress time and it will annex ole Mexico and Purgatory next. Humph! this thing of a hen han' more chicks than she can cover, I don't believe in. What's Congress and the law-makers know 'bout that man been killed? What does the local authorities kee? Ah, major! I love my country—have fit and died for it, but I don't like some things 'bout her internal machinery—the way her laws are executed. That's the Utah poligamists—a mere handful—that for years have defied our laws, our judges and our cannon. And then, just think of that insane Ingin policy! Oh, Lord! it makes my very ha' blush for man's ignorance of the Ingin."

"I am not an advocate of the humanitarian Indian policy, Dan, for the reason it is not a success," replied St. Kenelm. "I am inclined to think that a few such men as you, well armed and equipped, would do more toward keeping the Indians under subjection than all the Quakers in America."

"Thar, major!" exclaimed Dan, bringing his bony palm down upon his companion's knee, "you have hit it plumb-center!"

By this time the house had been cleared of all evidences of the late murder, and the "order" restored.

The gamblers had all resumed their seats at the tables, and business went on as before.

Missouri Moll, with an air of relief, began his pacing up and down the hall, imploring any one to become a victim to his pugilistic wrath.

Several times his savage eyes rested upon our friends, but no direct challenge was given them.

"Who is that desperado, Dan?" asked Major St. Kenelm.

"He's a stage-driver they call Missouri Moll," replied the old ranger. "He drives from Conejos to somewhat south and back, once a week. He's a great bully, and every one of them critters hangin' round him would kiss his feet, that'd kick 'em the next moment. If he'd whip every man here, they'd fight for him the next minute because he's Missouri Moll, the King of the Stage—Hullo there!"

At this juncture the door was opened and a new-comer entered the room. He was a young man—in fact a mere boy, whose timid, unsophisticated looks told that he was entirely out of his place. The boy had a clear dark eye, it is true, and was really "good" looking, but his ill-fitting suit of dark gray, his awkward movements, and his bashful, half-frightened looks, told that he was from the "rural districts" of the States. He had doubtless become fired with the spirit of Western life, had run away from home, and had called in at the "Swil Pail" to make observations.

Dan and St. Kenelm saw that he was a stranger, and for a moment he became a focus upon which all eyes were centered. And at length Missouri Moll espied him, and smacking his lips in high gloat, exclaimed:

"I never drink, sir, thank you," replied the boy.

"You're no business in here, then," replied the bully.

"I know it; but I came in through mistake."

"Yes, yes, younker; I made that mistake, too; so come up and drink—you must."

"No, I will not," the boy replied, firmly.

"But you shall, sir," the driver said, fiercely;

"I'll be teetotally cussed if I don't pour it down your throat. I'll hold your nose, my babe, and pour it right down, and you'll think me fur it, some day. I say, ole Slop-tub, behind the bar, that, fill me up a mug of hot liquor. This boy must drink."

"Major," said Dakota Dan, in a low, solemn tone, "that boy sha'n't be imposed upon. Before that liquor goes down his throat, either that desperado or Dakota Dan will be dead. If I fall major, I hope you'll git through the mountain safe."

"I am really sorry that we got into any trouble at all, Dan," said St. Kenelm.

"So am I, major; and I reckon I'm to

ger rose, and with a deadly fire in his steel-gray eyes, advanced to the side of the trembling boy.

CHAPTER XV.

RED ROB'S RAID.

MISSOURI MOLL soon returned with the liquor.

"Here, boy," he said, "drink this down and be a man."

"See here, ole hose," said Dakota Dan, interposing, "if this boy wants to drink, I've nothin' to say, but if he don't want to, you sha'n't force it onto him."

"The roarin' demon!" exclaimed the bully, in apparent astonishment, at the same time tossing glass liquor and all over his shoulder behind him, regardless of whom they struck, "what's this? A man, or a mummy? What little, ole, dried-up institution are you that dares to put in a lip whar Missouri Moll, the King of the Stage, reigns supreme? Why, man, I shall grind, pulverize to dust and sprinkle over this floor your withered carcass."

"I don't know anything 'bout your powers to grind up folks," responded Dan, coolly, "but I'm determined you sha'n't carry out your threat with that."

"Durned if I don't show you, ole drybones," roared the bully; "see here, ole Dutch oven, send over another mug of 'strangulation,'"

The last words were directed to the bartender's wife, who at once filled the order, when a dozen eager hands flew to the bar to bear the glass to their master, Missouri Moll.

As soon as the glass was placed in the stage-driver's hands, the bully advanced toward the shrinking youth and reached out and attempted to seize his nose between his forefinger and thumb. But at the same instant the form of Dakota Dan straightened up and his bony fist was planted directly between the eyes of Missouri Moll. The driver dropped like a log to the floor, spilling the liquor as he went down. But with a roar like that of a mad bull, he sprang to his feet and squared off, tore open his collar, shoved up his sleeves and was then ready to exterminate the old ranger.

The boy burst into a peal of laughter.

"The Lord e-ternals!" hissed the desperado, "I'll make you squeak outen 'tother side of your mouth. I'll exterminate both of you—"

"Go in, King Molly, I'll back you," cried Manuel Chicaloo, the very individual whom the desperado had knocked down a few minutes before; "I'll tend to that boy—I'll earn him how to insult the King of the Stage—I'll earn him manners, the insignificant little son of—"

The villain's low, abusive words were here cut short by the youth's fist, which, quicker than thought, was planted on the wretch's mouth, knocking him back against the bar with terrible violence.

The youth's blow proved the signal for a general attack upon himself and Dakota Dan.

And, seeing the danger of his friend and the boy, St. Kenelm, springing forward, became involved in the fight.

High above the din of the conflict suddenly arose the piercing scream of a whistle. It is said from the midst of the crowd. It caused an involuntary lull in the confusion.

The next moment a yell was heard outside. The trampling of hooved feet was heard upon the street. The sounds approached. The door was burst suddenly open, and, to the horror of all, a masked horseman galloped into the saloon! In his hand he held a cocked revolver. He was immediately followed by another and still another, until a dozen mounted and masked horsemen were in the room.

Terror swayed the crowd.

"Red Rob! Red Rob, the Boy Road-Agent, is upon us!" burst from the lips of one.

It was enough. A panic seized the crowd, and a general confused rush was made for the door and the windows. The road-agents opened fire upon the confused mass. In a few moments the saloon was deserted by all save the outlaws and three dead men.

Dakota Dan, St. Kenelm and the boy were also gone.

A yell that fairly shook the building burst from the lips of the robbers as they ranged their animals around in front of the bar, and called lustily for "drinks."

But no one answered their summons.

Finally one of the party dismounted and went behind the bar to wait on the others. To his surprise he found the bar-tender and his wife there, curled up under a sleeping-bunk.

The fat couple were routed out, and by strong argument in the shape of a cocked revolver, were persuaded to set out the drinks and cigars until all were satisfied. Then one of the robbers demanded:

"What's the bill?"

"The quaking, terrified German looked wild.

"What's the bill, I ask?"

"Mine Cott, nodding?" gasped the man, "if you leave here just quick. Mine frow is almost to death scared, and trembles in her pody mooth fast."

"That's not the question: what do we owe you?" demanded the masked road-agent.

"Two dollars pay for all, but I no charge you if you go fast hurry away."

Despite his remonstrances, the outlaw paid the bill, and without further annoyance rode out of the saloon, and galloped away toward the mountains.

By this time, however, Conejos was wild with excitement. The name of Red Rob was upon every lip. But in the midst of all, no one thought of attempting the capture of the young outlaw. Self-defense was the only thought that filled the minds of the terrified populace, for all they had no need of fear. They possessed nothing that the outlaws wanted—noting that they could make away with, and joy followed the brief reign of terror, when it had become known that the road-agents, on leaving the saloon, had taken their departure from the village.

The list of casualties at the saloon were four men killed—including the one shot at the gambling-table—and several wounded. Among the latter was Missouri Moll. He had received a wound in the fight with Dakota Dan and the boy that was likely to lay him up for several weeks, as in fact it did.

Dakota Dan and St. Kenelm escaped with but few bruises; but it left their minds in a state of fear. They were afraid that their participation in the saloon fight would involve them in future trouble; and the fact of their being at the saloon at all would be instrumental in causing the withdrawal of the friendship of the better class of the citizens.

"But we've got to watch 'em, major," Dan said, as they wended their way back toward camp; "they're a set of devils, and that's no' their way side, you're fightin' on, nor whose friends you're strakin'." Oh, Lor! if I'd just had ole Patience, my mare, and Humility, my dorg, than in that saloon, the Triangle'd been complete, and gracious man! no tellin' what'd a' happened."

"An awful secret, aunty? Goodness! I thought you were always the happiest old woman on earth—with troubles or cares, and

blame fur it all; but I can't help it. If that's anything on earth that I'll fight fur, it's for women and children, for I was a chile one't, and my ole mother war a woman. When that boy came in tear, lookin' innocent-like, I couldn't stand and see that 'tarnal big bully impose on him. But, mortal pison, major! a volkaner! strength and fightosity slumbered in that boy. Ole Patience, my mare, couldn't kick harder 'n he struck that are Mexican; and I never seed' Humility, my dorg, flip around spryer than he did."

"Do you know how he came out of the fight?" asked the major.

"Never seed' him arter we closed in. I hope he got through safe, though; for I tell ye, major, I took to that boy as natural like as water runs down hill. He's nobody's friend, I'll bet you. I think all his rural appearances war put on. But be that as it may, whenever we meet him ag'in, we'll meet a good, brave friend."

"Yes, we assumed the risk of our lives for him," replied his companion; "but, Dan, it ap-

pears that one of Red Rob's men was in the

saloon at the time we were."

"Even so, major; and the moment the fight began, he called his pals by that ear-splittin' whistle, Snakes of Jee-rusalem! I thought judgment had come when I seed' the reckless devils come a gallopin' right into the saloon and go to shootin' and bangin' right and left, regardless of friends or foes. I war jiss sailin' in handsomely on Missouri Moll, churnin' his physiognomy in splendiferous style, when they came in. But that boy, major—did you notice him?—did ye see his eyes? Major, I, Daniel Rackback, do firmly, positively and honestly believe that that very identical boy war Red Rob!"

"Indeed! I have thought so myself, Dan. Probably we'll find out soon. He may give our camp a call before he leaves the country."

"Not yet, chile: de twelve years will not be out yet fur four long weeks; den I tell it all, though it break my ole heart, and I speaks it will break my poor, darling Octaby's heart and Massa Al's too. But I promised ole Massa I'd do it, and de good angel of my soul recited my words on de big book in heaven."

For a moment both the old woman and her young mistress were silent—plunged deep in the labyrinth of thought. Finally the negress continued:

"And den dar am anudder trouble in my heart, Octaby."

"Another trouble?" repeated Octavia, in painful surprise; "you are the embodiment of secrets and troubles, Aunty. I wish I could believe you of some of them."

"Law-sakes-alive! Bless your soul, honey, you're jis speakin' right outen your heart now, Octaby. Now tell me, chile, ar'n't you in love?"

"Why, what a question, Aunt Shady. Is that what troubles you?"

"Law-sakes-alive! You can't hide from me a thing—anyone can injurin' a hair of the heads of the old man or the friend whar he war on. Last night, will be shot without trial or jury, and no one will be tried for that occurred in the fight last night, and to me let the injured look for satisfaction. Red Rob."

This seemed to renew the fear and excitement of the populace. All even feared to question each other as to the old man and friend referred to. They knew how fruitless had been the efforts of the military to capture this band of daring robbers, and so the very name of Red Rob was sufficient to impel obedience to the wishes of the young road-agent. It soon leaked out, however, that the "old man" referred to was the redoubtable Dakota Dan, the ranger, and "his friend," Major St. Kenelm. This discovery threw some suspicion around the emigrant train—in fact, led to the belief that it, or some of its members at least, were in some manner connected with the outlaws.

Notice—any one injurin' a hair of the heads of the old man or the friend whar he war on. Last night, will be shot without trial or jury, and no one will be tried for that occurred in the fight last night, and to me let the injured look for satisfaction. Red Rob."

Octavia laughed a clear, musical laugh.

Aunt Shady, too, in that hearty, good-natured way of hers, adding, with a knowing shake of the head:

"You can't fool your ole Aunty, chile. She young once too—"

"And loved some one, I dare say," put in the maiden.

"No, not ebbery young squirt dat come along, for chile, your ole Aunty used to be as gay a colahed gal as dar war in all Kentucky. And dar war a dozen—oh, law-sakes yes; a hundred young colahed chaps tryin' to shine round your Aunty, but I just up and sack dem ebbery last one. But dar war one, Sam Johnsing, a gay young nigger, dat kept a-coming and a-coming still, and at las' yer Aunt Shady got her dander up and she jis' took dat nigger by de collah and sent him a-bouncing. Den I married one ob massa niggers dat war a good man, and loved de Lor'. And dat's just de way I'd do wid dat young ranger boy, chile, if I talk about 'bout you now, don't you?"

Octavia laughed a clear, musical laugh.

"I may never see him again, Aunty," replied Octavia, with a roguish smile. "Moreover, I don't know whether he wants to marry, or loves the—"

"Oh, pshaw! you don't understand what I say

THE Saturday Journal

Published every Monday morning at nine o'clock.

NEW YORK, MAY 15, 1875.

The Saturday Journal is sold by all Newsagents in the United States and in the Canadian Provinces. Parties unable to obtain it from a newsagent or those preferring to have the paper sent direct, by mail, from the publication office, are supplied at the following rates:

Terms to Subscribers, Postage Prepaid:

One copy, four months \$1.00

Two copies, one year \$2.00

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THE COMING LITERARY SENSATION!

A New Author to the Front!

Soon to be given in the SATURDAY JOURNAL:

TIGER DICK, THE FARO KING;
OR,
The Cashier's Crime.

A TALE OF MAN'S HATE AND WOMAN'S FAITH.

BY PHILIP S. WARNE.

As announced, this new story by a new author, is in striking contrast with the old order of things among the "time-honored" authors, whose story is evolved like the rolling out of a panorama, with an occasional halt for the showman to moralize or explain. It is of the new school, which takes only salient and significant acts by strongly-marked characters, and letting them tell their own story, succeeds in producing chapters of surprises, and is full of that interest of *person* which we feel even for a thorough scamp or villain when he acts well his part. The author is the very antipodes of hackneyed; he sees human nature not with others' eyes, but with his own, which are as sharp and searching as those of an eagle; and in incident and plot we have a "new departure" which will be welcomed both for what it gives and for what it suggests.

TIGER DICK

is a romance of a Western River town, in which a professional "sport" is the marplot and evil genius, and a cashier is both principal and victim in a desperate game. There is, however, no distinctive "hero," for almost every character is a center of deepest interest. The Banker's Own Son, who is to be the sacrifice of scheming scoundrelism—the Young Woman who braves all for his sake and becomes, unconsciously, a remarkable detective—the Banker's Only Daughter, whose fate is fatally inwoven with that of the cashier—the Decoy of "the Tiger," by whose aid and art much of what happens was brought about—the River Boatman who leads a charge of ruffians in a fearful crisis—all are characters quite new to story literature, and serve to render

TIGER DICK

a romance as notable in its way as "Overland Kit" is in its peculiar field, and which lead us to expect much from its author, whose second story for our columns is so well under way that we may promise for it an impression that will establish its author's reputation as foremost among the new school of writers of whom Bret Harte was the *avant courrier*. He will, we hardly need add, write

ONLY FOR THE SATURDAY JOURNAL.

The Arm-Chair.

SPELLING-MATCHES are now "having a run" that, with all their ludicrous novelty, promises to achieve good results. As a nation, we are notoriously bad "spellers." Almost every person, even among the well-educated, will fail occasionally in their orthography; but, taking the business correspondence of the day as a fair criterion of the average mastery of the verbal forms of our language, we are forced to admit that there is a sad need of the schoolmaster in counting-rooms, in public and professional offices, and business-life generally.

An order the other day, made by an eminent Wall street operator to his broker, read:

"Buy 200 shares Unum Pictifl an 200 Eve to mi account."

And this was not Old Uncle Daniel Drew, whose spelling, it is said, has made his brokers all bald-headed in deciphering his orders and communications. It came from one of a hundred men who are magnates in our monetary circles, yet whose early education evidently never reached "baker" in Webster's old spelling-book. And, what is a bad feature of the case, this ignorance does not seem to be a source of the least annoyance or mortification to the delinquents.

The present excitement over the lexicon is well calculated to show, even to the "hard heads," the value of a correct orthography, and we say, give all encouragement to the spelling-match. Make all classes participate, "Ring in" the ministers, the editors, the judges, the lawyers, as well as the tradesmen, mechanic and student, for no class is exempt from deficiencies which these matches cannot largely correct.

Sunshine Papers.

Bits of Romance.

INTO every life, I think, there has come some bit of romance. There is never a worn, weary, lonely woman—a slighted, sharp-tongued wife—a gay, rollicking bachelor—a plodding, prosaic man of business, who has not one tiny, white, sweet chamber in the heart locked against some pale ghost of the past. Those little gleams of a sweet long ago! How, sometimes, a bar of music, a familiar tone, a shaft of moonlight, a dewy blossom-scented breeze, will revivify them with a touch of pain that we had thought impossible! How after they have lain dimmed and forgotten, under the accumulated films and mental refuse of years, a chance word will rend their coverings and

they will stare us in the face and make us wonder whether the image we conjure is really us, until, like Mignon, we shall scarce recognize ourselves.

There is Eleanor—gay, witty, sarcastic Eleanor—who has counted her birthdays up to thirty, and is the same to-day she was ten years ago. People wonder why Eleanor has never married, and rail at her sarcastic tongue, and censure her wit that spares neither sex nor position; but people do not know of the bit of romance in Eleanor's life. How, years ago, she, in an hour of unreasonable girlish madness, sent from her side her young lover, sent him to exile and death! While sorrowing, remorseful Eleanor longed for his presence, and chided herself for her rashness, her lover was traveling, without a good-by to any friend, toward California; and the first message that reached his Eastern home was of some wild nights of dissipation terminating in a fatal fever. Eleanor rushed from the bitter stings of his friends, and the reproaches of her own troubled conscience, and the gnawing pain of her heart, to her room, and opened the pages of a book where his last gift was hidden—some sweet-scented leaves of which she had been fond—yellow and brittle now—and faint as the dead subtle fragrance floated against her face. Ever since that day Eleanor has buried her bit of romance under her gay, sarcastic manner; and only a few, a few young men and maidens, know how thoroughly she can lay that manner aside when there are sensible, earnest, kind words of advice to give. But, though Eleanor's romance was so many years ago, it has life still. Stopping upon Broadway to buy a bouquet she will select one which has none of the green leaves in it like her lover's last gift; and, not a year ago, at the gift of some flowers plentifully interspersed with them, I saw her whiten to the lips and forget to finish the witty speech she was making.

Bennie is a clergymen, beloved, and earnest, and gentle—one of those pure, tender spirits that seem born to give counsel, and sympathy, and comfort; and Bennie has a wife devotedly loved; but there is in his heart a tiny, dim, shadowy recess that holds some shattered imagery. When the silvery moonshine falls athwart a room, Bennie lowers the shades, and lights a lamp, and keeps it out, because shafts of such pale sheen have the power to imbue the imagery with form and naturalness, and recall such misery as almost wrecked a life.

Percival is the charm of many a gentleman's party. Handsome, debonair, successful, he is admired, and sought, and envied. A pet of womankind, a jolly companion, who dreams of the little grave in Percival's heart, holding one only treasure—the remembrance of one summer night—that has kept him from love of a woman through fifteen gay years; and that makes him faint and heart-sick at the sound of one little song?

Miss Maria is dead now; but well I remember the dread I had of her fault-finding ways, and her sharp tongue. And, how, one night, in tears at some cold reproof, I sought Addie's room, and begged her to sing for me. The doors were open, and Addie sang "Listen to the Mocking-bird" and an air from the Bohemian Girl, and then some little ballad of the sea, of which the only line I remember was, "And the ship went down with the howling of the storm." At that Miss Maria came in and took me in her arms, and kissed me, and cried over me, and carried me off to bed more tenderly than I had ever known her to do before. Miss Maria's hard, rigid, stern life held a bit of romance that the little ballad had unvailed. Years afterward, when her useful place was filled by another, I saw Miss Maria's picture, showing her a blooming girl, instead of the serene-faced woman I had known, taken hand in hand with her brave young sailor, just before he went upon the voyage from which his good ship, with its crew, never returned.

How different would be our views of many lives could we read each heart's bit of romance! Sometimes, indeed not seldom, I fear, we pronounce erring judgment upon many an acquaintance, whose peculiarities and faults may be only the wild growth over heart-graves. Let us judge leniently, every live, for none there are that hath not its own secret.

A PARSON'S DAUGHTER.

WANTED.

PEOPLE who will think as much of the living as they seem to think of them dead. Truly has some writer said: "Don't write long obituary notices. Save some of your kind words for the living." If that writer carried his precepts into practice he couldn't have been a bad man; his heart must have been good and Grandma and I could have put our trust in him.

I believe in kind words, for they make us better for hearing them. How many a toiler would go down to the grave with tired hearts were it not for the utterance of kindly words! They act like water to the parched throat of the traveler in the desert; they are blessings to many and many a fainting heart. The world would grow cold and callous without them. It is hard to note how few of them people use when they are so plentiful. Yes, we want people to love the dead and at the same time not ignore the living.

People who will not jump at conclusions too readily—who will pause before they leap. Because John Henry says he is going to write a story called \$1000.00, I want people who will not report that he has stolen or lost that sum, or fallen an heir to it, or is going to receive that price for the story. People who will not accuse us of being engaged to every young man or woman whom we chance to be walking with; who will not say that every time we put pen to paper we are inditing a love-letter; who will not accuse us of being intemperate because the doctor has ordered us to put by rum out our cheeks as a cure for neuralgia; who will not accuse me of setting myself up for a saint because I am striving in an humble way to make others more true to themselves as I am endeavoring to do toward myself; people who have sense enough to feel enough for other's sufferings to aid them without asking whether they are worthy of it or not.

People whose thoughts do not run on matrimony all the time, and whose happiness does not always consist in making matches; who do not strive to do all they can to bring two persons together, into a matrimonial alliance. It seems to me there is much more profitable business for one to follow, and many not open to so many objections. I was going to say something about matches being made in heaven, but my idea of heaven is not one composed of a congress of match-makers, and I think there are sweater things to occupy the attention of the residents of that happy land. Am I irreverent in saying so, or is my opinion a sensible one? People who are in the habit of making matches must find time hang very heavy on their hands, or they haven't any useful employment to keep them busy.

People are wanted who are "true to the core"—who will love you as well when you

haven't a cent in your pocket as when your pocket-book is stuffed full of greenbacks—who can see worth in you even though that worth does not consist in gold or silver, and who will value you for your goodness of heart though that heart be covered with a ten-cent calico; people who will not be all honey and sugar to your face only to say contemptible things behind your back—who will not fawn upon you in your prosperity and snub you in your poverty—who will not beudge you a meal or help you to the purchase of clothing when you are in need of it.

Friends are wanted who will not be merely such in name but in reality—who will anticipate your wishes, and not think it too much of a hardship to put themselves out for you. Such friends are worth having, and they are needed. Are there too many of them in the world?

People who will take a supreme delight in making others happy, and showing that it is not such a selfish world as many of us would imagine, are sadly wanted. They are *never* unwelcome. If advertising would bring them how would those who are weary and heavily laden advertise! No matter whence they come from, we are willing to claim them for brothers and sisters. Well, and why should we not want them? I am sure they would prove true diamonds, even if their faces are homely, so long as their hearts are beautiful. We cry, God bless them!

EVIL LAWLESS.

CONTRARY TO GOOD MANNERS.

How often many of us are apt to neglect the day of small things and forget that "trifles make perfection."

There are scholars, in some of our country schools, who will come off victorious in a spelling-match because they can spell such words as "paralysis" and "Nebuchadnezzar," and will not even stumble over "Baalam" or "Semacherib," yet these very ones will spell the word perhaps prehapse, and when asked why misspell so common a word, reply that they "never paid much attention to such comon words."

I know of a lady, who prided herself on being a good grammarian, yet always said "I be" for "I am," and in numerous other points, was equally at fault. She would have been quite put out if any one had so much as insinuated she was not a good grammarian when she "had parsed so splendidly at school." There are persons studying algebra who cannot write a well-formed sentence. Others are toiling over Greek and Latin whose English could be much improved. I have known a teacher who taught no grammar in his school because he "hadn't time," yet there was time to spare for other studies. Not a great while ago every one was speaking of the accomplishments of a certain belle, and a literary gentleman was asked for his opinion of her. His reply was characteristic:

"She is a fine musician, dancer and linguist, but she does speak the worst grammar I ever heard."

A correspondent for a New England paper mourns over the fact that some of her country-women are so deficient in education, and remarks that she "does not believe scarcely one of them could make out a bill of sail"—the italics are mine, the spelling hers. Corrects others, yet is at fault herself.

Many of us have heard of the man who would not go to see the Cardiff giant, because he believed it was nothing but a "pubrifed statue." A great many of us "statutes" may be "putrified," but they have scarcely been as attractive as a petrified statue.

In the "green-room" of one of the theaters there is a dictionary put up on a shelf "for the actors to consult." The leading man of that establishment always pronounces *hetacon* "hetacon."

How very seldom we hear the opera of "Sonnambula" called anything else than "Sonnambula." I was once accused of wrong pronunciation because I said that the word "pantomime" was wrong and "pantomime" correct.

I know these things are not enough to put one in a "stew." They are merely jotted down to show what errors are made daily and that they may be corrected. If we get into the habit of spelling falsely and using bad grammar the fault will grow upon us, and we shall find it hard to break ourselves of the habit.

Grammars and dictionaries are cheap and the time we use in consulting them will not be wasted or thrown away. The murdering of our language is "Contra bonos mores."

F. S. F.

Footscap Papers.

That Cat.

It was the first piece of live stock that I ever owned, and I must say that I had no title deed to it.

Some sympathizing friend left him in our yard one night, and withheld his name.

It was one of those unostentatious acts of pure benevolence which are so deserving of credit.

This cat answered to the name of Thomas; although if a piece of meat was in the question, he would answer to any other name just as well. That was his way.

This cat belonged to the feline race, and from the morning we took him in he began to make himself at home, although the ceremony of introduction had been overlooked.

He was not a very prepossessing cat, Tom wasn't, for his eyes belonged to the sore order of architecture; his nose was hardly of the classical model, and his fur looked like it had been scorched by the stoves of many generations.

He rarely smiled, but had a dejected look about the face and a serious air about him that excited my pity.

I never took such sudden interest in any cat since, although my house has been of late a regular foundling hospital for all the useless cats in our town; people take the utmost pains to donate their good-for-nothing quadrupeds of this kind to me.

Sleep seemed to be Tom's normal condition, and he never woke up unless he was hungry.

He was one of the best jumpers I ever saw; he could jump three feet high—that is to say, he could jump up on the dinner-table with the greatest ease, when there was no one present, but somehow he was one of the worst cats to jump down I ever saw. I have frequently taken him tenderly by the tail and dashed him forcibly against the wall, but he managed to get over it without any feelings of revenge.

At the table, I could always tell when he was hungry, for he would put his fore-paws up on my knees and dig his toe-nails in.

He had many desperate battles with the rats, the rats always being the attacking party. I never could see how they could disturb him, either, because he never bothered them. In fact, I always thought he was their greatest

friend and deserved better treatment at their hands than that. He never injured one of them in his life, except in self-defense, and then he didn't hurt it much.

It was very a-new-sing to hear his mews.

He was the most mew-sical cat I ever saw.

If he had been properly worked up into fiddle-strings I would give \$250 for the fiddle, and on that fiddle I could have played thunder, and made Rome howl. It would have been the noisiest fiddle in existence.

He seemed to be a very unfortunate cat, for whenever anybody put his foot down, Tom was there, and always managed to be there until the foot was lifted again, but he let his sitation be known at such times.

If anything fell off the stove Tom always kept it from striking the floor. Flat-irons and skillets seemed to be his principal hold.

He also appropriated all the hot water that was spilled off the stove, until he was as badly scalded as some battle-scarred ruff-riger.

The hired girl practiced so much that she could let every stick of wood fall on Tom with the utmost precision; and the number of kicks which she gave him could not be stated unless I had the figures of the public debt of

the United States.

We decline "So Near! So Far!" "Paul and Opal," "Spring;" "Midnight Murder;" "Did She Smoke?" "Maple Leaves;" "Woman Nature;" "The Penn Legacy;" "The Secret Cave;" "My Night Alone;" "The Monument of Ages;" "An Old Joke;" "Mary's Black Sheep;" "Aunt Hope's Cottage."

We decline "Sometimes;" "My City Friends;" "New Grace;" "The Base Diamond;" "Life;" "A Sweet Hope;" "The Sister's Trust;" "Mrs. Bacon's Best Dress."

W. W. G., Galesburg. We have the 25c. series under consideration. Also the serials spoken of.

ADALADE. Call upon any theatrical manager; or, what is better for you, visit some well-known actress.

C. R. W., Have written you. You are not qualified.

ADALADE. Call upon any theatrical manager; or, what is better for you, visit some well-known actress.

C. R. W., Have not, to write for the press. Your work is very crude.

AUTHOR of "YELLOW JADE." Have lost your address.

ADALADE. Call upon any theatrical manager; or,

what is better for you,

ONLY PANSIES.

BY LUCILLE HOLLES.

Only pansies!
They slipped from paper grown yellow and old,
Stabbing my heart with a nameless pain;
Links, thoughts tight of a broken chain,
Lying in sunlight gold.

Only pansies.

Only pansies!
I gather them softly against my breast,
Where they once rested, years ago;
Gleaming then with a royal glow,
From the faces they pressed.

Purple pansies.

Sweet bright pansies;
The ones that my lover each morning laid
Dew-washed, upon my bosom fair;
Or blooming in my braided hair,
Oh, fearless pain that paid!

For these pansies!

Pearl-gray pansies.
Now, dead pansies
Are the ones I hold to my aching heart.
Their sweet life gone, their velvet bloom
Faded, as he whose bitter doom
My life has shared part

O'er these pansies.

Holding pansies!
The sunlight has kissed not since the sad day
That I look back to—when dead,
I would my life, like theirs, had fled!
But my lips cannot pray

Over pansies.

Little pansies,
Oh, tell me for him whose lips I made cold,
Can sin like mine be forgiven?
Will my love seek me in heaven?
Or must my future hold

But dead pansies?

The Terrible Truth:
THE THORNHURST MYSTERY.BY MRS. JENNIE DAVIS BURTON,
AUTHOR OF "STRANGELY WED," "THE FALSE
WIDOW," "ADRIA, THE ADOPTED," "CO-
RAL AND RUBY," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XVIII.

UNDER THE ELMs.

ANOTHER turn of the kaleidoscope, another succession of brilliant mornings, afternoons and nights, a whole week during which the gayety had not flagged, and New Year's eve was ushered in.

Thornhurst mansion was ablaze with light, alive with merriment. There was a grand ball there on this New Year's eve which was meant to close the dissipation of this holiday-time. It was not meant to close the pleasures at Thornhurst, but, as those to come would be of a quieter order and in greater moderation so this occasion was to eclipse all that had gone before.

Without it was a gusty night with ragged, black clouds chasing across the sky, with the moon and stars gleaming through at intervals, with the wind tearing like a moaning spirit through the bare drooping elms, and in the dark cedar grove a legion of unquiet spirits might have been confined to judge by the plaints issuing from thence. A depressing, ghostly night with its rushes of light and shade, with a crisp snow upon the ground, but with the bitter air which had prevailed through the day softening, and some light flakes floating down as the ragged clouds gathered more thickly overhead.

Nora pausing in a window with her hand upon her escort's arm, shivered as she looked out upon the dreary scene. A band was crashing through the Guards' waltz at their back, warmth and perfumed atmosphere and brilliant lights were about them, but one of those loud wind-walls pierced to their ears, mournful, eerie, as though it might have foretold a doom.

"If I were superstitious I should believe that some harm was to befall this house tonight," she said. "That sounds gruesome enough to be a banshee's warning."

Sir Rupert, looking out for a moment with a shade of the gloom of the night upon his brow, smiled down upon her.

"Abandon the dreary outlook then," he suggested. "Come and waltz with me instead. I don't very often dance, and you are one of the few who might tempt me to the indulgence."

"Your pardon, Sir Rupert. I claim Miss Carteret for the next waltz."

It was Mr. Telford coming up to remind her of her promise. "All men may not be favored of the gods, but few of us that will not wring recognition from the angels when we may. Never suppose I can be forgetful of a promise, however oblivious you may have become, Miss Carteret."

She took his arm with a glance around and a backward word to the baronet.

"There is Miss Montrose, cornered in by two merciless mammas interested in having their own pretty daughters near as possible first in the field. Can't you relieve her from that extremely uncomfortable position?"

All the gloom cleared out of the baronet's face on the instant. He had looked and looked in vain for Miss Montrose during the earlier part of the evening. It was not for him to know that once he had passed within two feet of her, and only the speedy intervention of Mrs. Grahame's voluminous skirts had saved him the discovery, or that that lady on some plausible pretense had whisked her immediately away to the obscurest corner. Sir Rupert's awakened interest was apparent enough.

Should the great *parti* of the season, the wealthy baronet for whom half the beauty of New York was angling, be surrendered ignominiously to a young person who had never before been recognized by even the society here?

—one who was most probably an adventuresome interloper, for some hint of the worthlessness of that Southern plantation had got abroad notwithstanding all the caution of Walter Montrose. Never if subtlety of interested chaperone could effect a rescue.

Destiny was against Mrs. Grahame this once, however. Sir Rupert made his way directly to the obscure corner, and led Miss Montrose out of it, in gratified triumph.

"I was disappointed at believing you not present," he said, "inclined to quarrel with every one if you had gone off as I supposed you had without ever saying good-by. In that case I would have hunted you up in the morning to make my own adieu."

"You go soon, then?"

"To-morrow afternoon, New Year's Day though it be. I am to see a friend off for London on the third."

"My father and myself leave for Georgia, the day after to-morrow. You will have the opportunity of saying a long farewell within the next two hours, Sir Rupert, since I leave here early. Quite a number of people make it a practice to turn a new leaf every New Year's Day, to begin a fresh era of their lives. I shall make my preparation by packing a trunk and leaving the dead past of six years spent here behind me."

"Do you throw off all remembrances so easily? I have an objection to saying that word 'farewell.' I shall ask it yet to let me make it *au revoir*. Can you tell me who is that gentleman just entering? He is the very image of a person I have seen."

She glanced up, a smoldering fire leaping on the instant into those slumberous, dark eyes.

"Who is he like, Sir Rupert? It is my father."

"Your father! And that makes another coincidence. He is the picture of John Montrose, Earl of Cleveland, was a dozen years ago, of what young Lord Charles will be in twenty years to come. A vague reminiscence comes up to me, the recollection of hearing of a wandering younger brother of the house. Miss Montrose, is it possible?"

"Don't imagine it possible if you were going to conjure a relationship between our own and your noble Sussex house. America is a fine, large country, but all the black sheep of titled aristocracy need not or necessity have come here, or having come need not be confounded with honest republicans who chance to bear the name. I at least would never covet the distinction of such relationship. Do you not find it very close here, Sir Rupert? Will you not find me in the air for a moment?"

Her face was turned away, but there was a tremor in her voice as she spoke, showing how her confidence touched her.

"You do me more honor than I deserve by having thought of me so kindly, Sir Rupert. I must beg—it will be better if you never think of me again. I am grateful, believe me, and the best return I can make for such noble frankness as yours is to urge that you will never attempt to see me again; never think of me if you can help. Oh, Sir Rupert, what is that?"

She clasped his arm nervously, shaken from her habitual self-command. A cloud had broken, and the full moon shone down brightly for a moment. It shone upon a moving form among the elms, which drew back quickly into shadow. Sir Rupert, too, had seen the form, but his own solution for the appearance came with the momentary glimpse.

"Some one strolling out in the air, or perhaps a farmer's boy of the vicinity taking his view of the ball from a distance," he remarked, carelessly. "The wind is rising; I will not detain you here longer. But I must hope still for the permission I have asked before we part."

He held open the door for her to pass through, following himself, but left her with a word, the moment they reached the throng. He made his way to where Nora stood, with the moment unattended.

"Vane is here," he said, in a tone which should reach me but hers.

"Here?—where? Has he seen the colonel? Wait, come this way. Now tell me."

A few steps placed a column between them and the crowd, and Nora's eager face uplifted, her brown eyes lit with expectancy and apprehension.

"He has not seen any one. I had but a glimpse of him, lingering under the elms, but I could not be mistaken. It was positively Vane. He has come, although I wrote to him it would be better not to do so. I could hope for no good from it, when I saw from day to day how bitter and unrelenting the colonel has been. I am going out to speak to him; naturally he does not wish to face all these guests, and is most probably waiting an opportunity to enter unobserved."

"Would you mind, Sir Rupert?"—Nora's face drooped and her flowing hair shaded it—"if I go instead? I should like to see Vane, and it may be my last chance. Colonel Vivian will not soften—he will order him from the house most probably, and Vane will go with no pleasant remembrance of this night."

"Go, by all means. I hoped you might wish for it."

She flew up to her room to throw a waterproof over her evening dress, to thrust her slippers into her overshoes, then sped down a back-way and across the snow-crusted lawn to the line of elms. The wind was just swaying the bare, drooping branches now, and there was light enough to show her a dark form leaning against a tree-trunk, watching the lighted front. He neither heard the light, step, nor saw the approaching shape; she stood by his side and put out her hand to touch his arm before he was aware of her presence.

"Vane?" He started and looked around at her. "Sir Rupert told me that you are going away, and I want to say to you how truly I regret the misfortunes which have estranged you from your home and friends."

"You are too lenient, Miss Carteret. There is no reason why you should not join with all the rest in denouncing the atrocious deeds of which I have been guilty."

"There is a reason," she said, meeting his moody eyes with brave, sympathetic glance. "I am your friend, even though you do not care to acknowledge me as such. I know you have felt hardly toward me, and I know why. I—want to thank you"—her face drooped, and her fingers worked nervously with a button of her cloak—"for being so honest when the colonel proposed his plan to you. I never could have consented if you had, and I never dreamed until afterward of his intention. He went to be reconciled with you that night, you know—"

"I beg pardon, I do not know," he interrupted. "He came to denounce me as I deserved, but it was none the less hard for all that."

"That was afterward. He did not find you at your lodgings; he returned to the house and met Dare, who took him to that place."

"Dare?" he gave her a keen glance. "Dare went with me there."

"He left you there while he returned with a story to your father's ear which I believe was purely his own invention, of your desperation and his fear that you meant harm to yourself. A servant chanced to overhear the conversation, but was discreet enough to say nothing until the result came out. I believe still, as I did from the first, that he has been the means of bringing all this evil upon you."

Vane's lips compressed in a hard line. Doubts of Dare had crept into his mind of late, despite himself. His face softened as he looked at her.

"If you are my friend, Nora, it repays me a hundred-fold for the loss of those who were friends and have turned against me. I have only one thing to regret in my soul, and that is my father's just anger. I could not go away, perhaps forever, without making one effort for his forgiveness. If I ever redeem that part of my life which is past, I will come back; if not—"

She laid her hand upon his arm again with beseeching eyes turned upon his face.

"If not—you will let me say it to you, because I am your friend—if not, you will promise that no desperation shall ever drive you to attempt your own life again?"

"A hot flush swept over his brow.

"You do not appear to dislike it yourself."

"No; I have an odd passion for fierce-tempests, a positive liking for all sorts of rough weather. Nature is never so alluring to me as in her wildest moods."

"You will be content to let me detain you here for a moment, then? I asked you back there to let me say *au revoir* at our parting. May I, in the course of a few months, come to see you in your Southern home? I will estimate it as a priceless boon to be granted the privilege."

His tone, more than his words, brought a new revelation to her. What could she say? There was only one course to pursue, but how could she refuse to least wound an honorable, high-toned gentleman? He went on speaking gravely and earnestly.

"Who is he like, Sir Rupert? It is my father."

"Your father! And that makes another coincidence. He is the picture of John Montrose, Earl of Cleveland, was a dozen years ago, of what young Lord Charles will be in twenty years to come. A vague reminiscence comes up to me, the recollection of hearing of a wandering younger brother of the house. Miss Montrose, is it possible?"

"Don't imagine it possible if you were going to conjure a relationship between our own and your noble Sussex house. America is a fine, large country, but all the black sheep of titled aristocracy need not or necessity have come here, or having come need not be confounded with honest republicans who chance to bear the name. I at least would never covet the distinction of such relationship. Do you not find it very close here, Sir Rupert? Will you not find me in the air for a moment?"

Her face was turned away, but there was a tremor in her voice as she spoke, showing how her confidence touched her.

"I will not leave you in doubt of my motive, Miss Montrose. I have learned to care for you as I never cared for woman before in this single week since we first met. The time is too short to hope I have wakened any return. If the time ever does come when our acquaintance is prolonged, when you have learned to know me better, when you can give me an answer to what you must know is in my heart to-night, it will be time enough to plead for myself. What I ask is not to hold you compromised in any degree, but to grant me the favor of becoming better known to you."

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Psyche mirrors, and the thousand and one costly trifles ladies with more money than they know what to do with love to gather round them. It was, altogether, a perfect gem of a room, this boudoir of my Lady Landsdowne.

On a lounge under the window, in a charming morning toilet, half-buried in rosy cushions, lay my lady herself. A pretty woman, as you know already, blue-eyed, golden-haired and fair-skinned, with regular features, and an air that might have done credit to a princess royal. Fair-haired, blue-eyed and delicate-featured, a gentle delineation surely; but Lady Landsdowne would not have impressed you with the idea of gentleness. The fair face looked hard and haughty at the best; at the worst, as it was this morning, it looked sour, sullen, and almost fierce.

A little stand with the remains of an epicurean breakfast, stood at her elbow; the last new novel was in her hand, but she was not reading; she was listening—not in impatience, not in eagerness, but with a look of sulky determination about the thin, bitter lips and in the wicked blue eyes. What she listened for came at last. There was a tap at the door, and her French maid entered, dipping and smiling.

"A gentleman was below, and wished to see mi lady. He did not send his name, but said he came on important business. *Oh, mon Dieu* he was!"

Sure enough, there he was, at mademoiselle's elbow—a tall gentleman, with a handsome, bronzed face, jet-black beard and mustache, dark-bright eyes, and the air generally of an Italian brigand.

"Your mistress will see me," said this dark apparition; "have the goodness to go, mademoiselle!"

Mademoiselle looked at her mistress, aghast. My lady had risen to a sitting position and waved her off with her jeweled hand. She seemed very little surprised or startled by this strange visitor; she had turned pale, it is true, and mademoiselle noticed it was like the gray pallor of death; but that was all. Her glittering eyes were fixed on his face as he came in and closed the door, and she was the first to speak, clearly and steadily.

"So you have come," she said; "sooner or later I knew you would!"

"I have come," said the deep voice of Senor Mendez, standing before her, dark and stern as Radamanthus. "I have come to seal your fate! Murderess, matricide, bigamist, your career is run. I come as an avenger, to lead you to your doom!"

A strange mode of saluting a great lady in her own house! But Lady Landsdowne only looked up in his face with a smile that showed all her glistening white teeth.

"Will you not take a seat, Mr. Hazelwood?" she said, in her sweetest tone, "or perhaps you prefer to stand? That tragic speech would bring down the house if you were in Drury Lane, or in the Bowery, in your own delightful land over the sea! Did you expect me to faint at sight of you, this morning, Conway?"

He looked at her in amazement. Bold and daring as he knew her to be, he was hardly prepared for such hardihood, for such brazen effrontery as this. She broke into a derisive little laugh as she watched him.

"Even so, Mr. Hazelwood! Strange to say, I fear you no more to-day than I did sixteen years ago, when I poisoned your pretty bride, got your brother hanged, broke your father's heart, and sent you a waif over the world, Oh, no! I am not afraid of you, Conway; I never was afraid of any thing or any one in my life, and I am not likely to begin now!"

"You are the devil himself, I believe," said Mr. Hazelwood; "but if you were ten times the incarnate demon you are, your race is run, your power to do evil is ended. For stone walls, a treadmill, or a strait-jacket have rendered harmless worse fiends than you!"

Again she laughed her low, mocking, derisive laugh. The woman seemed to be scarcely human in her daring fearlessness; and it was no mock courage, you could see; some secret sense of power suspended and lifted her above all fear.

"Justice, though the heavens fall! Is that your relentless motto, Mr. Hazelwood? Well, I have reason to be thankful to you for the sixteen years' grace you have given me! You see I have not wasted my time—I have gained wealth, rank, title, position. I have drunk the wine of life hot and sweet, and now that I have got to the lees I find them rather bitter and palling to the taste. I am getting *blase*, Mr. Hazelwood, and even the treadmill may be pleasant by way of change! How has the world gone with you these sixteen long years, my dear husband?"

"Woman! woman! is no spark of human nature left in your black and murderous heart, that you can talk like this? It matters not to you where I have been—I have known where you were this many a day, and I spared you. You had entrapped a good and honorable man into marriage by your devilish wiles; and for his sake, though he was a stranger to me, I spared you. You were a double, a treble murderer. You had ruined my life, made me a wanderer and an outcast, but still I spared you.

"And, friend that you are, I would have spared you to the last—I would have left you to the Great Avenger of all wrongs, but for this last, cruellest deed of all. The shameful and inhuman deed committed last night!"

"Committed last night! Oh, you mean turning that girl out of doors! Why, Mr. Hazelwood, reflect—I come home and find a young and pretty woman domiciled with my husband, a young and handsome man, and—

"Silence!" he thundered, raising his voice, for the first time, and with a flush from his dark eyes, that made even the female friend before him cover. "Silence, or I will forget I am a man, and strangle you where you sit! Wretch, Jezebel, fiend! You know as well as I do, that girl is your own daughter!"

Lady Landsdowne, stretched out her hand for a jeweled fan on the table, and began fanning herself.

"Mr. Hazelwood, oblige me not shouting out in that manner! It's extremely ill-bred, and you'll have every servant in the house here to see what the matter. Suppose she is my daughter—what then? It only makes the matter worse! I don't want her here—you stole her from me when child—you thought I wasn't the proper sort of person to bring up your daughter, and you have kept her ever since, I didn't care much for her then—I care a great deal less now! I knew perfectly well, from the first moment I saw her, who she was—and a rare start she gave me, I assure you, for my nerves are not at all strong at times; but, as I said, I didn't want her here—so I turned her out! If it were to do over again, I would do it in half an hour—just the same!"

"I don't doubt it! You would murder your own mother if you took it into your head!"

"Yes, and if she ever comes troubling me here, I shall feel tempted to do it! Oh, you need not stare! I know she is in Monkswood,

and has the other one with her—I have seen them both, though she never saw me. I know more than you think, Mr. Hazelwood. I know how she stole Rosamond, and would have stolen Evangeline to spite you, if she could! Poor little wretch! a sweet life the one she did get must have led with her—half-starved all her days, I dare say!"

Conway Hazelwood stood looking at her, his dark face white as death.

"And this creature who sits there and says such things is human and a woman. Oh, in all this wide world does such another monster exist?"

She smiled up in his face and fluttered her pretty fan.

"You think me unique, then. I take it as a compliment! But if I am a monster and a murderer, and all the other sweet things you call me, whose conduct made me so, pray! I was the daughter of a New England innkeeper, a pretty, innocent barmaid, who used to fill the glasses of Captain Forrest, and his fast young friends from New York, make their punch, and sing for them with such charming simplicity and such innocent blue eyes and long golden curly hair—the very image of their papa. Papa found it out, relented, and came to see them, gave them money, and went away again. The ill-used wife waited, and waited, and at last, growing tired of that, began to act. She got money from him regularly. It enabled her to act all the better. She found out the reason of his absence—he was about to break the laws of his country and marry another wife, a richer and more presentable bride. She found out she was not Mrs. Forrest but Mrs. Hazelwood; but her husband was rich, and treacherous, and despised her. To add to it all, he stole her children from her one winter-night, out of a poor and lonely house, in a lonely marsh, where she and her mother were stopping for a few days, on their way to New York. That was the last drop in the cup; not that she cared much for the twins—they were only a burden and a torment to her; but the act galled her woman's nature. She resolved to be revenged, and in her own way. All that was savage within her—and Old Nick had always lain latent behind those innocent blue eyes and golden ringlets—rose fierce to the surface. She left her mother, secretly came to the city, obtained a situation as housemaid in the house of her husband's bride-elect, and laid her plans. It was she who wrote the notes to the bride and her lover; it was she who followed him down Broadway that memorable night dressed as a man. Had her trap laid for him succeeded, he might have been arrested for the murder; but he baffled her there. It was her hand administered the poison, hidden in a cup of coffee, and for which his brother died! Yes, she became a murderer, but whose was the first fault?"

"Yours, woman; for you entrapped me into a marriage I never would have thought of in my sober senses! Who can blame me for tiring of you? Why did you not come forward and proclaim the marriage, as you might have done? Mine alone was the fault; mine alone should have been the atonement. But, no, you were merciless, and now I shall be merciless to you! With the measure you have meted to others shall it this day be measured to you! The hour of retribution has come!"

"Has it? What are you going to do, Mr. Hazelwood?"

"I am going to summon Lord Landsdowne here, and tell him your whole diabolical history. You entrapped him as you entrapped me. You have been his bane and the curse of his home, as you have been of mine! Then you shall enter a carriage that awaits you at the door, and I shall take you to the house where you are to drag out the rest of your wretched life."

"Might I ask where this house is?"

"It is an English madhouse! There in your stone prison, separated even from the unfortunate who will be your fellow-captives, you may learn in solitude to pray for pardon, and, perhaps, mercifully obtain forgiveness from Him who is more merciful than man; from Him who has said: 'Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall become white as wool!'"

"Thank you for your sermon! But suppose I do not believe in a future state; suppose I do not choose to pray—what am I to do then?"

"What you please! Your power to do harm will at least be ended. You should be thankful that your punishment is so slight!"

"Oh, I am—excessively! When am I to go?"

"Immediately! I am going to send for Lord Landsdowne now. You had better put on your bonnet and shawl, and be ready to accompany me in half an hour."

He rung the bell as he spoke, and my lady arose, with her cold, slight laugh:

"Short notice! But it is all poetical justice, I suppose. My bonnet and shawl are in my bed-chamber, you know. I shall beg you to excuse me while I put them on."

"Any attempt at escape will be useless," he said, sternly. "You shall not go out of my sight!"

"I shall not ask to. You may go in and examine the room. There is no door—no secret and mysterious trap-door, and the window is twenty feet from the ground. Go in and look yourself, if you do not believe me!"

He did go in with her, and she watched him with her cold, evil eye as he examined the apartment. What she had said was true, and he left her carefully adjusting her shawl round her graceful shoulders, and went out again to the boudoir to answer a rap at the door. It was a servant come to reply to the call.

"Is his lordship in?" Mr. Hazelwood asked.

"Yes, sir; he is in the library."

"Ask him to have the kindness to come here at once, will you?"

The man bowed and disappeared. Mr. Hazelwood glanced into the inner room. My lady was still busy before the glass. Five minutes passed, then Lord Landsdowne opened the door, staring with all his eyes at the stranger.

"Senor Mendez—you here! Where is her ladyship, and what—"

"My lord, come in!" was the grave answer.

A quaking cry and a heavy fall, in the next room. Both rushed in. Before her dressing-table, my lady lay flat on her face, writhing in dreadful convulsions. Conway Hazelwood lifted her up, and her face was an appalling

sight—blackened, convulsed, distorted, the lips foaming, the eyeballs starting. In one clenched hand she held convulsively grasped a vial, whose label told the whole story. The ghastly struggle lasted but for a moment.

The blackened and horrible face turned livid, the awful deep rattle sounded through the room; the hand fell back; the eyeballs turned in their inflamed sockets; the jaws dropped, and her soul was gone! Rose Hazelwood—Lady Landsdowne had gone to render an account of her dark and guilty life before the highest of all tribunals, and the two living husbands stood looking on the dead wife!

CHAPTER XXV.

THE STORY TOLD IN THE DEATH-ROOM.

SILENCE and gloom have, for many a day, been the pervading characteristics of Black Monk's Priory; but a deeper silence, a more dismal gloom hung over it this serene summer day than that oldest servitor of the house ever remembered before. With bated breath and noiseless step they stole from room to room, speaking in hushed whispers and with awestruck faces; for an awful visitor had entered unseen, unheard, unannounced. Death, grim and relentless, had been in their midst; and in one of the upper rooms, my lady lay cold and rigid, and lifeless. She had never been loved by one in the place. She was not regretted. There was not a living creature to drop a tear to the memory of the hard, cruel, haughty, overbearing mistress of Black Monk's; but its appalling suddenness stunned them. She had risen that morning in her usual health. She had eaten her breakfast with her accustomed appetite. She had not evinced the slightest symptom of the slightest indisposition, yet now she lay in her room a corpse. It was indeed enough to startle the most stolid among them; and clustered together in the servants' hall, the tragic event was profoundly discussed in all its bearings. Mademoiselle Rosine, the French maid, deposed how the tall dark gentleman had followed her to the boudoir, had ordered her away, and how horribly pale my lady had turned at sight of him. Mademoiselle was of opinion that the dark gentleman was either his Satan Majesty, or Death in bodily form; for Rose; I knew she loved a man; and I left her again. Then came that other marriage I told you of this morning; Helen was gentle, and loving, and innocent; and I really loved her, as she did me, with her whole heart. I was wrong, I know; I knew it then, too, but more than love led me on. My pride, my honor, her happiness, all were at stake, and I would not pause. I resolved to provide simply for Rose; I knew that she loved money a thousand times more than she did me, and to take my children from her. She was no fit guardian for anything innocent; I laid my plans and succeeded. I placed the twin infants under my father's care; I sent her an ample supply of money, and flattered myself she would go her own way and let me go mine. My lord, however terribly I was mistaken, you know. What I have already told you, I will not repeat; it is not fitted for the ears that are listening now. It half maddens me yet to think of my bride, my brother, my father! To that father I told all before I fled from my native land, and that tale was his death-warrant. For years I was a wanderer, and the most miserable of men; I went to the East, and lost sight of America and all I had left behind. In Syria, I made the acquaintance of Senor Mendez, a Cuban planter of immense wealth and failing health. He was an eccentric old man, with no near relatives; we became fast friends and traveling-companions; and at his death he left me all he possessed. I went to Cuba; my estate was a little paradise below; and for a few more years I spent a tranquil, idle, indolent, luxurious life. Then I grew tired of that, too; I came back to New York. There, under the name I had assumed with the estate, I found that I had fallen heir, long before, to Hazelwood, where my brother resided in my place; that one of the twin infants I had left under my father's care, had been stolen shortly after, and had never been heard of since, and that the other was at school in Canada. I came to England before going to Canada; saw my brother and my cousin Una, without being recognized, made another tour of the continent, and went back. This time I did visit Canada; I had known the proprietress of the school in Cuba; I visited her, and saw Eve, and from that time I never lost sight of her. When she was sent for to here, I came too. I accompanied her to Monkswood, and determined to remain and watch over her. The very evening of my arrival, as I stood talking to her at Hazelwood, a carriage passed us, and a lady looked from the window. I recognized the face instantly; it was one I had good reason to remember, though so many years had passed since I last beheld it—it was the face of the woman I thought dead—of Lady Landsdowne.

"I had met her in France!" Lord Landsdowne said, helplessly, "four years before. She was my nurse—governess in my family where I was visiting, and I don't know how it was, but her beauty, and her winning ways, and her sorrowful looks—"

"Oh, I understand it," Mr. Hazelwood said; "there never was a better actress. You married her as I did, and found out the difference. She did not see my face that evening; the first time she saw me was that stormy day at the village-inn, when the suddenness of the shock overcame even her iron nerves, and she shrieked and fainted. It was for your sake I spared her; I would have spared her to the end had she been merciful to her own child."

"Perhaps she did not recognize her," Lord Landsdowne said. "She did recognize her; she told me so. She was her from the first, and Rosamond and her mother too. By one of those strange freaks of fortune that astonish the world, at times, this old woman had brought Rosamond to the Canadian village where Eve was at school. Eve was recognized by her grandmother as soon as seen; and Paul Schaffer found the whole story from her by a bribe, and resolved to make use of it for his own ends. He was the open lover of Hazelwood, and the secret lover of Eve; he was jealous of young D'Arville, and laid a plot, with the connivance of others, to frustrate his rival and compel Eve to marry him in spite of herself. Una Forest, who should have been Eve's protectress, joined with him against her. You see the resemblance Rose and her sister bear to each other. You could scarcely tell them apart yourself, my lord. Rose was compelled to seek Schaffer by night in the grounds of Hazelwood, and carefully trained in the part she was to play; D'Arville was brought out to witness the performance; he never for a moment dreamed it could be other than Eve; and in the first impulse of outraged pride and love, left Hazelwood, without one word of explanation or farewell. Next day, Eve was driven from Hazelwood by the abuse of Miss Forest, and you know how you and I found her. I resolved that she should remain here until her mother returned, and see if one spark of human nature lingered in her hard and vindictive heart. You know better than I do, my lord, the scene which followed. I met my daughter flying from this house, as she had fled from Hazelwood; and then, and not till then, I told her who I was. I took her to the inn where I stopped; I found out this woman and my other child; I brought the three together and told them the tale I have now told you. That was the first part of my task; my second was one of retribution. I felt no mercy, no compassion now for her who lies there dead. I came here this morning to exact justice to the uttermost farthing. You should have heard the tale before her, and the cell of a madhouse should have been her home for life. She expected me and was prepared; she believed in no future life, she was weary of this, and so—"

at the village inn, kept by this old woman and her husband."

"Yes, yes, yes!" shrilly put in the old woman herself, "a lot of high-flyers, and Captain Forrest the worst of all—turning the silly heads of the girls, and drinking and carousing till all hours of the night. I warned Rose, but she always wanted to be a lady, and now she's dead! Oh, dear, dear, dear!"

"She was pretty, very pretty," Mr. Hazelwood went on, glancing slightly at the bed, "and I believed her as good and an innocent as she was beautiful. Still, in my sober sense I should never have married her, for I never really got beyond admiration of the fascinating little barmaid; but I was mad with liquor and altogether reckless when the thing was done. It was indeed marry in haste and repent at leisure with me; and before long I found out she was as corrupt of heart as fair of face. That settled the question. Much as my chains galled me, I might have been true to her but for that. I left her; perhaps I did wrong; I left her again. Then came that other marriage I told you of this morning; Helen was gentle, and loving, and innocent; and I really loved her, as she did me, with her whole heart. I was wrong, I know; I knew it then, too, but more than love led me on. My pride, my honor, her happiness, all were at stake, and I would not pause. I resolved to provide simply for Rose; I knew she loved money a thousand times more than she did me, and to take my children from her. She was no fit guardian for anything innocent; I laid my plans and succeeded. I placed the twin infants under my father's care; I sent her an ample supply of money, and flattered myself she would go her own way and let me go mine. My lord, however terribly I was mistaken, you know. What I have already told you, I will not repeat; it is not fitted for the ears that are listening now. It half maddens me yet to think of my bride, my brother, my father! To that father I told all before I fled from my native land, and that tale was his death-warrant. For years I was a wanderer, and the most miserable of men; I went to the East, and lost sight of America and all I had left behind. In Syria, I made the acquaintance of Senor Mendez, a Cuban planter of immense wealth and failing health. He was an eccentric old man, with no near relatives; we became fast friends and traveling-companions; and at his death he left me all he possessed. I went to Cuba; my estate was a little paradise below; and for a few more years I spent a tranquil, idle, indolent, luxurious life. Then I grew tired of that, too; I came back to New York. There, under the name I had assumed with the estate, I found that I had fallen heir, long before, to Hazelwood, where my brother resided in my place; that one of the twin infants I had left under my father's care, had been stolen shortly after, and had never been heard of since, and that the other was at school in Canada. I came to England before going to Canada; saw my brother and my cousin Una, without being recognized, made another tour of the continent, and went back. This time I did visit Canada; I had known the proprietress of the school in Cuba; I visited her, and saw Eve, and from that time I never lost sight of her. When she was sent for to here, I came too. I accompanied her to Monksw

ugly names; he shut his teeth firmly together for a moment, involuntarily his hands clenched, and an ominous light shot from his dark eyes.

All within the room bent forward eagerly to watch the issue. Few there but had seen men, giants in size, go down before Injun Dick's sledge-hammer blows, for far less offense than that now offered him.

Nearly all the crowd expected to see Dick dart forward and fell the Judge to the floor; and one half of those within the room would have justified the deed.

Neither they, nor Dick, had any suspicion that Judge Jones had slyly drawn a revolver from the drawer of the table, when he had first taken his seat at it, and now, with his hand upon the trigger, the hammer cocked, he waited for the attack, which he had fully calculated his words would bring. Of course, in self-defense, the Judge thought, and rightly, too, that few would blame him for using his grudge against you, look out for me."

But Judge Jones had reckoned "without the host."

With a powerful effort, Dick repressed his wrath.

"Judge, when a man stands before you with his hands tied behind his back, to strike him, even with words, is a cowardly act," Dick said, slowly and deliberately.

A low murmur came from the lips of the crowd. It was plain that the prisoner had more friends than the Judge.

"And now, Judge, let's have a good, fair, square show of hands; no cards up your sleeve, or aces rung in on a 'cold' deal," continued Dick, in the same cool, deliberate way. "What are you, anyway? Are you the Judge, sitting there to try me for some crime I am accused of committing, or are you the prosecuting attorney, whose business it is to prove my guilty if he can, whether I am so, or not, or are you both, rolled up into one? If you are, I'd like to know what kind of a show I'm going to get in this here court?"

"A show to be struck by lightning!" growled the man-from-Red-Dog, in anger.

"Silence in the court!" cried the Judge, sternly, and in anger. "In reply to your accusations, I will say that I am the Judge, and not the prosecuting attorney, but it is my duty to see that justice be done."

"That's all I ask," remarked Dick, quietly.

"Of course you are aware that, in certain cases, the judge, or the guilt of the prisoner being proven, has power to pass sentence at once," Jones said.

"That's square, every time; but I say, Judge; you commenced operations by saying that, as this was only a preliminary examination, a jury wouldn't be needed. Now, if you're going to have a jury, they've got to find my guilty before you can sentence me. And if the crime I'm accused of isn't big enough to go before a jury, why, of course the punishment will only amount to a fine. So you can prop me right away with your mule-team; if I've done anything wrong according to law, I'm ready to pony up for it, and if I haven't got money enough about me, maybe some friend of mine in the crowd will 'put up' for me."

"I'm your antelope!" yelled the man-from-Red-Dog, shaking a canvas bag of gold-dust excitedly in the air, and dancing, first on one leg, and then on the other, like a turkey on a hot plate. "I'll see you through of it but's me. I'm the big cinnamon b'ar from Red Dog, I am!"

"Somebody put that fool out!" ejaculated the Judge, sharply.

"Have you picked out the spot where you want that 'somebody' buried?" asked the Red Dogite, sarcastically. "Or hadn't you better 'go for me, yourself? Ef I hit you onc't, the durned old express company would want another agent at Spur City, you bet!"

CHAPTER XX.

A HITCH IN THE PROCEEDINGS.

"ORDER! order!" murmured some of the partisans of the Judge, scattered among the crowd.

"Who's a-sayin' any thing ag'in' order?" demanded the giant, looking about him, as if with intent to get his eyes on one of the speakers and inaugurate a free fight, there and then. "Is this a good 'squa' trial, or ain't it? Have you got the 'papers' packed on us, an' things fixed, so that my part that ain't goin' to have no sight for his money, say?" and the man-from-Red-Dog looked indignant. "That big cu-thar, that's tryin' to boss this job, stuck his pick into my 'lead' without my sayin' any word to him. I don't allow that any man from hyer to Austin, big or little, Injun or white, kin call me a fool, without havin' to peal an fight for it. I'm any man's antelope in a free fight, an' all I ask is a fair shake, you bet!"

"Order must be preserved, or the examination cannot go on," said the Judge, in a quiet way; he already saw that he had proceeded on the wrong track.

"That's so!" ejaculated Dandy Jim. "I never say any word ag'in' it. I only offered fur to see Dick through if he needed rocks. I stand ready for to put the furst man out myself, or he's as big as the side of a house, who miles things hyer."

"That is perfectly satisfactory," said Jones, evidently desirous of calming the troubled waters that threatened to overwhelm the impromptu court of justice. "I was rather hasty, perhaps, in the use of the expression, which I addressed really more to the whole crowd than to any one man in it; and, I suppose it is as well that I should state right here that I recall the offensive word, and trust that it will be overlooked."

"That's square!" exclaimed the gentleman from Red Dog. "I don't knock any chip off any man's shoulder, unless he puts it there to be knocked off. Your 'pology' is accepted, Judge. I'm willin' to be forgiven, an' of I've done anything I ought to be sorry for, I'm glad of it." And with this jocose remark, peace was once more restored, and the examination went on.

Jones saw plainly that Dick had made up his mind to take the affair coolly, and not to be provoked into any violence. The Judge felt that he had lost the first point in the game, and that his adversary had the best of it at present.

"The charge against you, Talbot, is a very serious one," the Judge said, slowly; "too serious for me to handle alone. I don't want to assume any responsibility beyond what the citizens here have already conferred upon me. As your life or death will hang in the issue of this trial, I shall summon a jury of twelve men, good and true, and place your fate in their hands."

The members of the crowd looked at each other, rather astonished at the words of the Judge. Mechanically, each man put the question to himself: "Of what crime was Injun Dick accused?"

"You will have a fair, square trial before a jury of your fellow-citizens here; your fate will be in their hands, not in mine," continued the Judge. "I make this remark, because, by your

words, you seemed to insinuate that I was acting unduly against you. Now, I am not aware of any reason existing why I should have a spite against you; do you know of any?"

"No," Dick replied, promptly; "but, Judge, in this world, a man ain't always able to tell his friends from his enemies. You may have some secret spite against me that I don't know any thing about. I don't say that you have; I don't know any reason why you should have; I never trod on your toes in any way that I'm aware of. But, as I said before, a man can't always tell. When the ship is on the ocean, it isn't the rock that rises above the water that's dangerous; it's the one beneath the surface, that the waters hide. Just so in life. I never yet feared, or turned my back on an open enemy. I was always prepared for him; ready, willing to meet him. It's the man that strikes you in the back that's ugly—the fellow who hasn't the courage to say: 'I've got a grudge against you, look out for me!'

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False Faces. OR, THE MAN WITHOUT A NAME.

A MYSTERY OF THE GREAT METROPOLIS.

BY GEO. L. AIKEN,
AUTHOR OF "A LIVING LIE," "SNARED TO DEATH," "BERNAL CLYDE," "ELMA'S CAPTIVITY," "STELLA, A STAR."

WHIPPING-POST AND PRISON.

"WHEN Chester here came to me seeking my services in your case, (for I had adopted the profession of detective as one affording the excitement congenial to my mind,) and stated the facts, I knew that I had found what I had been so long seeking," continued Ray.

And Raymond knew that Skelmersdale had slain his mother, for the story of the tragedian at French Creek had been related to him by his father, and he exulted over the sentence pronounced upon her murderer.

"My name is Raymond Bartyne, but I have been known in the force only by the name of Frank Ray."

And Raymond knew that Skelmersdale had

slain his mother, for the story of the tragedian at French Creek had been related to him by his father.

"Had I known what I know now," he told his father, "there would have been three dead bodies left in the wood instead of two, and the third would have been that of Edgar Skelmersdale."

Raymond persuaded his father to remain and witness the whipping to be inflicted upon Edgar.

They formed part of the throng around the whipping-post. The forty lashes were duly inflicted, and then the culprits were placed in the pillory for one hour, there to endure the gibes and mockery of the rabble of half-grown boys and idle men.

When the hour expired they were taken to the jail.

Genni Bartyne and Raymond returned to New York. Preparations were at once commenced for the visit to the oil wells, Almira, being now nearly recovered from her wound.

The party, consisting of Bartyne, Almira, Etta, Kate and Raymond took their departure, Chester going with them to the ferry, and exchanging a tender farewell with Etta.

"Almira Plummer."

"She bothered me a little by guessing who I was. I had no idea that she was a woman.

I thought she was a strange sort of a man, but the knowledge of her true sex explains all the strangeness away. I can understand her action now. She urged me to reveal myself to you, but I was still resolved to catch this Edgar Skelmersdale and his gang first."

"You have succeeded!"

"Yes; after their attempt at assassination they abandoned this section, and crossed over to Jersey. Vengeance was their object here; plunder was their object where they went. They did not know that I was on their track. They still kept ahead of me, but I tracked them to Wilmington, Delaware."

"So far! What could have taken them there?"

"A robbery, which they planned with all the shrewdness and cunning which characterize their organization. Masked in their false faces, they burst suddenly into the cashier's house, surprising him in the midst of his family. Their intention was to handcuff him and demand the keys of the bank-vaults."

"A daring scheme!"

"But not successfully worked out. At the time the False Faces entered the room there were more parties present than they had anticipated, and the game they were attempting to play became consequently all the more perplexing. Consternation followed the appearance of the robbers in those square faces, which, while bearing a human semblance, were as impulsive as the face of a corpse. The women screamed, and one fainted dead upon the floor. The cashier was handcuffed, though he made a gallant resistance. The cries of the women, their wild efforts to escape, the struggles of the cashier in his manly endeavor to free himself, raised an alarm, and the robbers were obliged to retreat without obtaining the keys of the bank-vaults. I and my friends arrived in the town the next morning. We heard the story and knew that they were the party we were in search of. We joined in the pursuit and, I make no boast in saying it, by our aid and advice the whole party were captured."

"What became of the other two?"

"We left them dead in the wood where we overtook them. Though surprised, they made a desperate resistance, and two were killed in the struggle to overpower them."

"Was Edgar Skelmersdale killed?" inquired Bartyne, quickly.

"No; we took him and the lawyer, Selkreg, and Doctor Waterval alive, and they are now in Newcastle jail awaiting their trial."

"Then a just punishment will be awarded to them."

"Undoubtedly. Were they here in New York they might find some loophole of escape, but there it is impossible. Justice must be dealt out to them there to the full penalty of the law. You can now rest in peace."

"I hope so; but, Raymond, I have a strong desire to be present at the trial and hear the sentence."

"Very good, sir. I shall have to attend to give some evidence, and you can go with me."

Raymond Bartyne, to give him his true name, took up his quarters at the house in Eighteenth street after that night.

At his father's request he gave up his profession of detective, and took an interest in his business at the office.

Genni Bartyne's idea was to leave the New York office in the charge of Raymond and Chester and return himself to the Bartyne residence.

He had several objects in view, all depending upon Almira's recovery. As soon as she was able to travel, he intended to take her, Etta, Kate and Raymond to the wells, and make definite arrangements for the future.

He had surprises in store for all of them, and he smiled in anticipation as he reflected over them.

In the mean while he should have the opportunity to witness the trial of the False Faces.

It was not from any spirit of revenge that Genni Bartyne wished to hear the final doom pronounced upon the man who had so deeply wronged him, but to feel satisfied that his power of injury was destroyed or rendered nugatory.

Being apprised of the day appointed for the trial, Genni Bartyne and Raymond went to Newcastle, the county-town of the county of the same name; therefore the trial was held there, the city where the crime was committed being in the same county.

The trial was held on the nineteenth of November and lasted until the fifth day of December.

The prisoners were all convicted and sentenced, first to receive forty lashes at the whipping-post, and then to be imprisoned for ten years.

The whipping-post is an old-time mode of punishment, peculiar alone to the State of Delaware. In no other State in the Union, that I am aware of, is this method of punishment retained.

Edgar Skelmersdale's cheek paled as he listened to his sentence. The term of imprisonment he did not heed, though it would take the ten best years of his life from him; but the moral degradation of a public whipping was the keenest torture that could be inflicted upon his poor spirit.

Not suspecting anything wrong he opened the door and looked out.

The instant he did so he was fiercely grasped.

He saw the muffled figures of what he supposed to be four men; he heard low mutter-

ings and hurried whispers, and the instant after, without the opportunity to raise a cry, he was hurled to the ground, a strong hand clutched his throat, a glittering dagger flashed before his eyes, and then its keen point was held against his breast, over his heart.

He knew that Bartyne had found his son, for when Raymond testified, he said:

"My name is Raymond Bartyne, but I have been known in the force only by the name of Frank Ray."

And Raymond knew that Skelmersdale had

slain his mother, for the story of the tragedian at French Creek had been related to him by his father.

"One cry, one whisper, one breath louder than we alone can hear, and you are a dead man!"

It appeared to him that these words came from a woman's throat, but the the threat was none the less portentous.

The next moment he was gagged, handcuffed and leg-ironed. The prison keys were taken from him. Two men guarded him, knife in hand, while the other two with the keys went to the cells of the False Faces and released them. They visited no other cells in all the prison save these.

Edgar Skelmersdale clasps the disguised woman in his arms, when he comes from his cell, for he is the first to be liberated.

"My brave Dora! well done!" he cries.

And she feels rewarded for what she has done.

Then the others are released one by one. All

HE NEVER TOLD A LIE.

BY JOE JOY, JR.

I saw him standing in the crowd,
A comely youth and fair;
There was a brightness in his eye,
A glory in his hair.

I saw his comrades gaze on him,
His comrades standing by;

I heard them whisper each to each—
"He never told a lie!"

I looked on wonder'd at that boy
As he stood there so young;

I heard him never an untruth
Was uttered by his tongue.

I thought of all the boys I'd known—
Myself among the fry—

And knew of none that one could say
"He never told a lie."

I gazed upon that youth with awe—
That did each man along;

I had seen him stand before—
So perfect and so strong;

And, with a something of regret,
I wished that he was I,

So they might look at me and say—
"He never told a lie!"

I thought of questions very hard—
For boys to answer right;

How did you tear the balloons?

Myself I was asked that night?

Who bit the pumpkin pie?

What boy could answer all of these
And never tell a lie!

I proudly took him by the hand,
My words with praise were rife,

I blessed that boy who never told
A falsehood in his life.

I told him I was fond of him:
A fellow standing by,

Inform'd me that that boy was dumb
Who'd never told a lie.

LEAVES
From a Lawyer's Life.

BY A. GOULD PENN.

V.—Cell Number Nine.

THE Commonwealth against Jack Daring, indicted for horse-stealing, called the prosecutor in court one morning, in response to the judge's demand for the next trial case.

"Let the prisoner be brought in, Mr. Sheriff," commanded the judge.

Accordingly a deputy soon appeared, followed by the prisoner, heavily ironed, and he was placed in the dock.

This was the notorious Jack Daring, one of the most famous and successful horse-thieves known in our country. Long had he plied his nefarious calling, and by his cunning escaped the just punishment for his crimes, but now he was secured at last.

Jack Daring was no ordinary criminal. As he took his place in the prisoner's dock, I was strangely impressed by his appearance and demeanor. He was a man of medium height, with a clear, intelligent eye, and a face handsome as a picture, and in his manner was none of the cringing, guilty aspect usually worn by men of his calling. A perfect gentleman in dress and manner, and no one would have supposed him to be merely a sharp horse-thief.

While taking a mental measurement of Jack Daring, my pleasing impressions were increased by his very intelligent answers to the questions asked him by His Honor.

"Whom have you chosen as your counsel?" asked the judge.

"I have made no choice, your Honor," urbane replied the prisoner.

"Have you any means with which to pay an attorney for defending you?"

"I have not."

"Mr. Smith, the court will appoint you as counsel for this prisoner," said the judge, in his business-like way.

This was the recognized custom in our court, to appoint counsel for indigent prisoners, and it was considered disgraceful and unprofessional for an attorney to solicit of a prisoner the unenviable task of conducting his defense.

Hence I was not altogether pleased at being selected for this case, for I knew that it would be a task that would reflect but little credit upon an attorney; but even the vilest wretch is entitled to legal assistance, and my path of duty was clear.

I accordingly conducted Jack Daring, still in irons, into a consultation-room for conference.

I found him to be a man of unusual intelligence, and even well read, but could get from him no intimation of guilt, as he stoutly maintained his innocence of the charge.

"But, my dear sir," I asked, "how do you propose to establish your innocence?"

"Not by producing testimony to clear me," he answered, giving me a knowing wink which left me in doubt as to his real intentions.

"Then pray tell me how?" I demanded.

"Easily enough, Mr. Smith," he answered; "the jury will agree to disagree."

"How do you know that?"

"Jack Daring has been here before," he replied; "there are men in the court-room, and even now on the jury, who would not dare to convict Jack Daring."

Here bravado, I thought; but, as if reading my thoughts, he exclaimed:

"You doubt my statement, Mr. Smith?"

I stared at the rascal in astonishment.

"Of course I do," I replied; "but if you rely on such chances, I am afraid they will be a frail support."

"I will assume the risk," said Daring.

So we returned into court, and the trial was commenced.

A jury was obtained composed mostly of well-known and reliable farmers—men who, of all others, are least inclined to favor the purloiners of horseflesh. I saw in this no hope for my confident client, but he seemed as calm and indifferent as though he was a mere spectator.

The testimony for the prosecution was ample of its kind, and, to my mind, left no chance for a verdict of Not Guilty.

As in duty bound, I instituted a rigid cross-examination of the witnesses, but found very few inaccuracies of statement, and literally nothing of a doubt to favor my client.

The arguments were lengthy on both sides, and the day was about finished when the jury retired for consultation. The prisoner was conducted back to his cell for the night, and the court adjourned until such time as the jury should report.

I returned to my little office in the evening, where I found my student, Lewis Ayres, waiting for my appearance. I saw by his looks that he had something to communicate.

"What's up, Lew?" I asked.

"A message from Sheriff Lee, sir, saying that Jack Daring wished to consult with you this evening."

"Heard from the jury, Lew? Any verdict yet?"

"No, sir; but it is rumored that they have disagreed, and will stay out all night."

"So, so! Well, I'll go up to the jail and hear what Daring has to say."

So saying, I left the office, and wended my way to the prison.

In answer to my ring, the old jailer opened the door, and when I stated my errand, he bade me enter. It was only by peering closely into my face that he recognized me, as he was near-sighted, and the dusk of evening prevented him knowing me at ordinary distance.

"All right, Mr. Smith; all right. This way, please," and taking down the huge keys, he led the way to the jail hall, and admitted me, following to unlock the door of Cell No. 9, which done, he retired, and I was left alone in the cell with Jack Daring.

"Glad to see you, Mr. Smith," said Daring, rising from his couch as I entered; "please be seated on my couch. Owing to my limited circumstances, I am unable to offer you a chair," laughing sarcastically.

I sat down on the prison couch, and took a survey of my surroundings. A dim lamp in the outer hall furnished barely light enough to distinguish objects in Number Nine, and filled the place with a gloom that caused me to shudder.

What a place for a human being to pass days, months, even years! I thought. And yet, some men regarded it as a mere joke. Ugh! I shuddered again at thought of spending even one night in such a dismal place.

Daring paced slowly back and forth the length of the cell, apparently waiting until I had completed my examination of the surroundings. His hands were free, as the irons were only used when he was taken from the cell—the thick stone walls and heavy, barred doors being deemed sufficient security against escape.

"You must excuse me, Mr. Smith, for thus imposing on your good nature," he at length began, "but I have some matters to communicate to you, and I could not content myself to wait until morning."

Very singular, I thought, but certainly characteristic of the man; and the more I pondered over his actions the more I became mystified.

"Have you heard any news from the jury?" he asked.

"None, excepting that there was a probability of their disagreeing."

"Good; that improves my chance for freedom."

"I cannot see how," I said, "for you will have another trial, and a new jury, and unless you produce some evidence that will clear you—conviction is certain."

"I have been a bad man, Mr. Smith, but if I can get clear this time I shall mend my ways."

Hypocrite! I thought, for I was sure I saw that in his face that belied his pretended repentence.

"Really, Mr. Daring, I must leave you, as my time is precious. If you want anything, or have anything to suggest, come at once to the point, and I will do all I can for you."

"I beg your pardon," he said, humbly, "if I have trespassed too much on your valuable time. You have been very kind to me, Mr. Smith, and I only wish I could repay you in a substantial manner."

It is so cheering to have company in this lonesome place that I have been tempted to prolong your visit to the utmost extent."

Again he resumed his tireless tramp back and forth in the cell.

What could the man mean? Was he intent on trying the insanity plea, or was he really a madman?

His manner was certainly strange, and some hidden object had induced him to send for me.

"I will call and see you in the morning," I said, rising from the couch and buttoning my coat around me.

"One moment, Mr. Smith. Just please examine the bars of that window, will you, and tell me how long it would take a man to cut them off and bid adieu to these uninviting quarters."

Again I looked at the fellow, and a comical smile wreathed his handsome face.

"I could not say, nor would I advise any such attempt," I answered somewhat sternly.

"Just glance out there, Mr. Smith, and see what a splendid perspective view it affords, under the rays of the young moon."

Whatever possessed me to comply with his foolish wish I cannot imagine, unless it was a desire to view the scene from the barred window. But, without taking thought, I stepped up to the narrow aperture and gazed out.

Suddenly I felt my hands grasped and pulled behind me, and before I could turn I felt my wrists encircled by a pair of handcuffs with a click that locked them securely.

As soon as I could do so I turned fiercely upon my antagonist, and saw a smile of triumph on his face.

"Be quiet, Mr. Smith," he said, in a pleasant tone: "do not make any noise now, or I shall be under the painful necessity of shutting off your breath."

"Villain!" I hissed, "what does this mean?"

For I comprehended that I was in his power, and utterly helpless.

But, there had been no immediate help for it. Agnes had been invited, and Agnes had come, and the written understanding had been for a year, at least.

And, of that year, seven months had passed when this dreadful March storm of sleet and snow and rain and wind was come, and Mrs. Davenport and Agnes, the "household" at Bluestone House, exclusive of the corps of servants, were sitting together in the crimson and gold boudoir.

Looking out into the darkness, Agnes was perfectly unconscious of the tableau being enacted behind her; or of the tempest raging in Mrs. Davenport's breast that excelled in violence the fury of the storm without.

The light was turned dimly down, and gloried like a silver moon through the globe; the fire in the steel grate added refined lustre to the brilliant gipsy figure crouching before it, on a white bear-skin rug, and watching the motionless figure at the window with a red sparkle in the jettie eye.

There wasn't an assuring expression on Helen Davenport's face, as she sat there, slowly twisting her fingers together, until the horrid monotony of the motion would have driven one nervous to see.

There I lay speechless, and utterly helpless, while he bound me to the couch with strips of blanket. I could only grind my teeth in rage, and inwardly curse my stupidity for allowing myself to be so easily drawn into such a net.

Having taken my coat and hat, he proceeded to dress me in his clothes and pass the near-sighted jailer.

"Please don't remonstrate, Mr. Smith, not a word," and he proceeded to dress me of my coat.

What could I do? If I only dared to shout and raise an alarm. But, no; I saw a determination in the villain's eye that told me it would be poor discretion.

Having taken my coat and hat he looked like my second self, being about the same size, and bidding me good-night he left the cell.

I heard the turnkey open the door for him to pass, and then he came on to Number Nine and swung the heavy door, and the lock clicked.

Oh, the agony of that fearful night!

Unable to move hand or foot I lay there in the most intense suffering of body and mind. To sleep was impossible, and after vainly strug-

gling to free my limbs I sunk down exhausted and unconscious.

A cool wet hand on my brow roused me to consciousness again, and I lay as in a dream.

Where was I? I could not recollect; my mind was almost a blank. Slowly it all came back, and I opened my eyes. A woman's hand pressed the cooling water on my brow, and poured a fiery liquid upon my lips. And then it all came back to me—my fearful struggles and strains, and now I was again free. I tried to speak but could not articulate a word.

Slowly my strength returned and I was able to sit up and speak. Strong arms carried me out of that dreadful cell, and placed me on a bed in the cheering light of a large room, and kindly faces bent over me, and again I knew no more.

Hours passed; then I awoke with renewed strength, and arose from the bed.

Lewis Ayres attended me, and answered my many questions, as I hurriedly asked them.

Jack Daring had escaped, and his absence was not known until I was found lying in his cell in an unconscious condition. Pursuit had been organized, but artful accomplices had aided him, and he was safe.

I told Lewis my adventure, and my brother attorneys gathered around and extended their kindly sympathies.

I shall never forget my experience in Cell Number Nine.

Wrought by a Woman.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

A WILD, stormy March night, with a fierce wind abroad that sent sheets of sleet in gusts against the window pane, and that shook firm houses until they trembled like frightened slaves before a tyrant.

A night when, if ever, one best likes to draw the easy-chairs and ottomans close to the fire, and gather all the household in a quiet, contented circle that shall mutually aid in forgetting the tempest without, and being thankful for comfort within.

At Bluestone House, on that rough March night, all the household were gathered in the cozy little sitting-room up-stairs, that was devoted exclusively to Mrs. Davenport's use, and very seldom opened even to Agnes Keswick, her niece—the wondrously beautiful girl who was sitting so quietly, so gracefully, at an end window, looking out into the darkness.

This was a gorgeous little room—this sitting-room of Mrs. Davenport's, one of three in the private suite of her own; a small, octagonal apartment, furnished in crimson and gold, with due regard for Mrs. Davenport's brilliant brunet beauty. A jewel of a boudoir, on the same scale of lavish extravagance as was everything else at Bluestone House, which, since the death of its master and owner, had been refurnished from attic to basement by her widow, who had not been long in making up her mind to let her hour had at last arrived when she was free to enjoy her life in her own way.

So she made a perfect paradise of Bluestone House, invited guests, instituted a series of enviable entertainments, and, in the fulness of a sudden impulse, wrote to her niece, Agnes Keswick, whom she had never seen, but knew to be very poor, to come and be her companion, sister, friend.

Then the instant she laid her bright, black eyes on the girl's glorious face, she knew she had committed an unpardonable blunder against herself; even while she took the small, shapely hand in her own, and kissed the proud, calm face, she hated the girl, and set to work to scheme how to retract her words, and send the girl back to her obscurity.

Not that she thought her own face less fascinating because of the vivid contrast—for Helen Davenport was a woman who was capable of holding her own anywhere; but because, away down in her heart that had never been touched until Warren Trelawney had crossed her path, very lately